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ABSTRACT

The report is an evaluation of the 1979-80 High School Title I English as a Second Language Program. Two types of information are presented: (1) a narrative description of the program which provides qualitative data regarding the program, and (2) a statistical analysis of test results which consists of quantitative, city-wide data. By integrating both types of findings, the report offers an in-depth profile of the program and its educational significance. The narrative description includes a separate perspective on the effectiveness of the program from the point of view of the personnel involved in the program, and based on consultant observations and interviews of program personnel in a selected number of representative schools. Issues of staffing, program coordination, student characteristics and the instructional program are addressed. The statistical information drawn from the program's criterion-referenced test specifies number of skills mastered, rate of success in meeting the evaluation objective, degree of participation and results according to instructional level. Attendance, reason for incomplete data, receipt of counseling and rate of success are analyzed. Conclusions and recommendations are presented based on the descriptive and statistical sections.

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OEE Evaluation Report

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Title I ESEA
High School
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
1979 - 1980

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I. Introduction

The following report is an evaluation of the 1979-80 High School Title I English as a Second Language Program. Two types of information are presented: (1) a narrative description of the program which provides qualitative data regarding the program, and (2) a statistical analysis of test results which consists of qualitative, city-wide data. By integrating both types of findings, the report offers an in-depth profile of the program and its educational significance.

The narrative description includes a separate perspective on the effectiveness of the program from the point of view of the personnel involved in the program. The description is based on consultant observations and interviews of program personnel in a selected number of exemplary and/or representative schools. They were chosen from a cross-section of schools based on last year's test results and the advice of the program coordinator. The narrative description addresses issues of staffing, program coordination, student characteristics and the instructional program.

The statistical information drawn from the program's criterion-referenced test specifies number of skills mastered, rate of success in meeting the evaluation objective, degree of participation and results according to instructional level. Attendance, reason for incomplete data, receipt of counseling and rate of success are analyzed.

Finally, conclusions and recommendations are presented, based on the descriptive and statistical sections.

II. Narrative Description

The High School Title I program for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) has two long-range objectives: to enable foreign-language speaking students to acquire skills in speaking, reading, and writing standard English; and to enable these students to acquire and improve skills in reading and writing their native languages. In addition, the program has two short-term objectives: to promote the pupil's intellectual and emotional adjustment to a new school and cultural environment; and to reduce the drop-out rate among non-English speaking pupils by giving them a sustained feeling of belonging, accomplishment, responsibility, and success. To meet these ends, the program provides intensive small-class instruction in English as a Second Language. The Title I program operates at thirty-eight sites and serves approximately 7,000 students.

Classes are officially limited to between fifteen and twenty students under the direction of one teacher and one paraprofessional educational assistant. Some ESL classes, however, contain a larger number of students because foreign students are accepted into the program as they come into the school throughout the year. The basic program structure consists of three levels: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. Following instruction at the advanced level, students are placed into transitional classes which complete the ESL program. Each of these classes supplements the students' one class period of tax-levy English.

Instruction in English skills is divided into phonology, vocabulary, and sentence structure. These skills are presented sequentially; that is, the order of instruction is understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. There is more concentration on reading and

writing practice at the advanced or transitional level than at the beginning or intermediate levels, although work on all four modes of instruction occurs at all levels.

Initial instruction in reading and writing is undertaken through the oral and visual presentation of materials. Thus, if the objective of a lesson is the comparative form of expression in English, the teacher begins with visual aids or examples from a familiar context to establish and illustrate the concept. In two classes that were observed in this unit, teachers had sets of stick-figure illustrations which elicited the comparative form of expression. At first, students listened while the teacher described the pictures: "This man is taller than that man." After several examples, the students were asked to reproduce this syntactical structure. The mode of instruction was repeated using comparatives with new vocabulary, negative statements, and questions. Following this, students were expected to offer original examples and to do written work with the comparative form. At an advanced level, the use of visual materials is replaced with more sophisticated written or spoken instruction. For example, in a transitional class students were asked to prepare persuasive speeches or to debate the pros and cons of an issue. This elicited the use of the comparative form in a creative, meaningful, and thought-provoking manner.

In general, instructional methods and activities include oral practice drills, visual reinforcement, and concentrated review of grammatical structure and vocabulary. Writing skills are taught to all pupils according to progress made in speaking, listening, and reading. Various forms of dictation and independent writing practice are presented from simple sentences to complex paragraphs or from highly

structured exercises to free exposition.

The Native Language Arts (NLA) or Language Experience Literacy (LEL) component of the program addresses the second long-range objective of the program: to enable students to study their own native language. This part of the program is necessary for students who have serious reading and writing problems in their native languages and cannot, therefore, participate effectively in high school classes in any language. All students enrolled in LEL classes receive concurrent English-language instruction through ESL classes. The program coordinators, aware of recent research, expect that strengthening students' native language literacy will facilitate their acquisition of English-language skills.

In addition to the regular ESL format, the program also has a Music Language Arts (MLA) component which provides additional motivation for language learning through the use of song sheets, records, and tapes especially designed for ESL. Music language arts instruction is conducted by ESL teachers with the help of workshops and materials offered by teacher trainers. At one high school a particularly talented teacher, trained in both ESL and music, conducted a highly successful MLA class. Students engaged in drills in which new language patterns were internalized through songs. This learning experience took place in a particularly enjoyable and lively atmosphere.

The careful selection of program materials and the systematic instruction of new skills enable the program to address its long-run objectives. By meeting these goals the program also helps the students adjust to their new schools and new cultural environment.

Staff

The program is administered throughout the participating high schools by a director who is responsible for the overall organization and site-by-site supervision of the program. Seven teacher trainers with experience and expertise in English as a Second Language and bilingual instruction conduct regular visits to the high schools and are responsible for providing on-site training and assistance to teachers and educational assistants. They offer help in improving teaching methods, choosing instructional materials, testing, and collecting data on student performance. Their activities include presenting workshops, developing and collecting materials for curriculum manuals, preparing the semi-annual ESL/LEL/MLA Newsletter, and conferring with school personnel concerning problems of programming and staffing.

In most schools, an assistant principal or a special coordinator administers the ESL program and also serves as a liaison between school staff and the central office. The specific organization of the program in a school depends upon the needs of the student population and the discretion of the principal. In many schools where a large proportion of ESL students also participates in the bilingual program, ESL is a component of the bilingual department and under the direction of an assistant principal or the bilingual coordinator. In other schools, ESL falls under the aegis of the foreign language department and is directed by its department chairperson. In still other schools, ESL comes under the jurisdiction of English, speech or communication programs and is administered by one of these departments.

The assistant principal or program coordinator conducts regular meetings of ESL teachers at which problems can be discussed and ideas and materials shared. He/she is also responsible for seeing that program guidelines are met and encouraging cooperation between Title I and tax-levy classes. At one school, in addition to the bilingual and ESL coordinators, there is a Title I coordinator responsible for facilitating the operation of all Title I programs. In ESL programs that have more than three teaching positions, the coordinator may be relieved of one or more teaching periods, but in smaller programs, the coordinators carry out their responsibilities in addition to a full teaching load.

Teachers confer with the program coordinator on the selection of tests, meet with teacher trainers, and screen students. ESL teachers must be trained in ESL theory and methodology and licensed by the New York City Board of Education/State Education Department. The test for licensing New York City high school ESL teachers examines competency in applied and theoretical linguistics, in comparative analysis of syntactic, semantic and phonological structures, in teaching methods, and in textbook analysis and cross-cultural topics.

The paraprofessional educational assistants who work with teachers in the classroom are frequently drawn from the immediate community. Generally they are not licensed ESL teachers, but through their classroom responsibilities they learn ESL techniques and objectives. Many are in training to be ESL or bilingual teachers and may consider their present positions as apprenticeships. They perform such duties as correcting students' written work, giving special help to individual students, and assisting with clerical duties (filling out class records,

checking attendance, organizing and duplicating worksheets). At some schools, the ESL coordinator conducts workshops twice monthly at which paraprofessionals discuss such matters as lesson plans, types of language drill, and any problems or issues that need clarification. In smaller programs, where there is no organized workshop, the teacher meets daily with the paraprofessional to review lesson plans and homework assignments, to discuss teaching techniques, and to prepare materials.

Curriculum Materials - Instructional Approach

Each teacher in the program is provided with a course manual the CREST Objective Locator (COL) for beginning, intermediate and advanced level classes. The COL, following a standard list of textbooks and workbooks, is intended to guide instruction in areas covered by the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST). The textbooks on this list include: Learning ESL by Oscar White and Sonja Martin; Graded Exercises in English by Robert Dixon; Access to English, I and II by Robert Breckenridge; and Revised Lado, Books 1-4 by Robert Lado.

The CREST Objective Locator is a syllabus in which English skills are presented in increasing order of difficulty while previous skills are reviewed, reinforced and broadened. For example, the comparative form introduced at the intermediate level (Adam is as tall as Melvin) reappears at the advanced level. But with the addition of the concept of comparative nouns (Adam is the same height as Melvin).

A wide variety of books and supplementary materials are also available besides the basic texts. In addition, teachers share individually prepared worksheets to complement the lessons. Teacher trainers,

on their visits to schools, often collect innovative materials from individual teachers and distribute them to other schools. Teachers are also invited to write articles for the ESL Newsletter discussing their materials, techniques, and innovations. Hence, although the COL lists specific items to be covered, teachers have ample opportunity to develop and implement their own pedagogical ideas. Besides curriculum variations, program flexibility is also apparent in course innovation. At one school, for example, a course in ESL Business Communication is being offered. This course includes exercises on writing business-letters, resumes and preparing for job interviews.

The CREST is given at the beginning and at the end of each term to measure the students' progress in relation to instructional objectives. This test, developed as an alternative to standardized tests geared to English-speaking students, helps to identify the specific skills mastered, or still needing mastery, by non-English speaking students. For every class, a CREST Class Record is kept, indicating school, teacher, ESL class title, date, level, and information on each student, including his/her name, data control number, and test performance. All of the instructional objectives are listed and teachers indicate those which have been mastered by each student. Teachers reported that they use different symbols on the records in order to make pre- and posttest performance clear and to have a ready reference to the individual student's progress for the term. Since all the students are listed on one page, it is easy to compare students and to determine how the class as a whole performed. An investigation is needed of the extent to which the CREST test is used as a classroom instrument in monitoring the

progress of individual students, especially because of the supposed dual function of the test; that is, as both a curriculum organizer and an evaluative instrument. Given that approximately 1,200 student test results were not reported each term (see the next section) the actual classroom use of the test is particularly pertinent.

Although the CREST results are a major determinant of a student's readiness to proceed to the next level of the program, they are not the only consideration. Quizzes, tests, homework assignments, and class participation throughout the term are also examined before a final recommendation is made.

Ideally, the Title I and tax-levy classes are closely coordinated, and where this is achieved the result is very good. For example, after two periods of a Title I class devoted to sentence structure, students can proceed to a tax-levy English class whose teacher is aware of what has been done during the Title I periods and therefore is able to reinforce and enrich the students' understanding by presenting complementary reading or writing exercises.

In general, coordination of Title I ESL and tax-levy classes at most sites is efficient with one period of tax-levy English to complement two periods of ESL at the beginning and intermediate levels and one period of ESL at the advanced levels. Generally, the Title I classes tend to focus on syntax and phonology while the tax-levy classes are oriented more towards reading and writing activities, although there is a good deal of overlap.

Students

Students in the New York City ESL programs come from ninety-one countries in which forty-three different languages are spoken. During the past school year, there were approximately 150,000 students in need of English as a Second Language--95,000 at the elementary level, 25,000 on the junior high school level and 30,000 at the high school and vocational high school levels. Some of these students are in tax-levy ESL programs; others are not enrolled in the program because they are not Title I eligible. The majority of these students are of Hispanic background, but other language groups are heavily represented in some schools--at one high school, for example, there is a large Haitian-Creole speaking population, and at another, there is a concentration of Chinese students.

Newly-arrived students are screened by ESL personnel in the school who place the students in appropriate classes. The level at which a student enters the program is determined by a placement examination and an interview. When possible, they are also given informal tests in their native language and placed in Native Language Arts (ESL) classes if necessary. If a student progresses at an extraordinarily rapid pace or if initial placement was inappropriate, the class assignment may be changed. At one school, provision for different rates of progress is made through a tracking system consisting of an academic track for faster students and a general track for others. In the academic track, the transitional class may be skipped by students who have mastered the objectives of the advanced level test.

Some ESL classes have more than twenty students because foreign students are accepted into the program as they come into the country

throughout the year. At one school, for example, one class grew to forty-five students during the year. The teacher said that her educational assistant alleviated the problem greatly by working individually with students who needed extra help. And the class at the time of observation ran very smoothly. But the disadvantages of an over-sized class should not be ignored.

III. Discussion of Student Outcome Data

Students participating in the English as a Second Language program were tested with the Criterion-Referenced English Syntax Test. Data were reported for 7,017 students in the fall and 6,274 students in the spring (see Tables 1 and 2). The evaluation objective of the program states that students should master two skills on the test for every four weeks in the program. Since classes were held for sixty-three days each term, a full-year participant should have mastered six skills each term. Approximately one-fourth of the students met the evaluation objective each term (see Tables 1 and 2).

No results were reported for approximately 1,200 students in both the fall and the spring. In Table 1 the statistical summary of the fall term includes these students in the totals, but excludes them from the results broken down by level. Because the test information was compiled differently in the spring, the spring results include these students in the level breakdowns throughout the summary.

A large proportion of the students in the program were in the ninth and tenth grades. Of these students, most ninth graders were in beginning level classes. In the fall most tenth graders were in the intermediate level; in the spring many tenth graders shifted to the advanced

level. The few eleventh and twelfth graders in the program were mainly in the advanced classes.

The proportion of students who met the objectives and the average number of skills they mastered decrease from the beginning to the advanced levels. This decline is especially significant between the intermediate and advanced levels. The differences are to a great extent the result of the number of skills being tested on each level; the beginning and intermediate level tests contain twenty-five objectives; the advanced level contains only fifteen. A little over half the skills attempted were eventually mastered. Clearly, if there were a higher proportion of skills mastered more students would have met the evaluation objective. The average student--attending approximately sixty days and attempting six skills--should have mastered all six skills attempted in order to meet the evaluation objective of one skill for every ten days of instruction. On the advanced level of the test with only fifteen skills being tested, students failed to master an average of only five skills on the pretest. Even if they eventually mastered all the skills in which they had demonstrated deficiency, they would still not have met the objective of the program. Thus, the small number of skills mastered is mostly the result of the small number of skills on the test.

A small number of students received counseling. This supportive service was fairly evenly distributed throughout the levels. The average attendance reported was very high and quite uniform throughout the program. Students were absent on the average for only three days per term.

According to Tables 3 and 4, the rate of mastery generally increases with more time in the program. Students for which no skills were reported are distributed throughout all the categories of attendance. These data indicate that the students were not simply "no shows", whose names were retained on the register during the course of each term. Indeed, one-third of all students who were not reported to have attempted any skills were present at least fifty-one days in either term.

In Table 5 student attendance is broken down by complete data reported and reasons for incomplete data. All the records with incomplete data contained no test results. Most of the reasons given were "absent for the test", "truant", and "discharged". Obviously, many of those identified as truant attended for only a few days. On the other hand, a majority of the students who were absent for the test had been attending the program regularly. Because some students in the program received a perfect score on the pretest, no posttest results were reported.

In Table 6, reasons for incomplete data are compared to the proportion of students who reviewed counseling. Except for truants, students for whom there was complete data were more likely to receive counseling than the students with any other reason for missing data.

The comparison of receipt of counseling with rate of success in the program indicated in Table 7 demonstrates that students were more likely to meet the evaluation objective if they received counseling.

In Table 8, data about the program in schools visited by evaluation consultants are summarized. This summary indicates that the results from these schools are fairly representative of the entire program.

TABLE 1

Statistical Summary of the Program in the Fall

	<u>Beginning Level</u>	<u>Intermediate Level</u>	<u>Advanced Level</u>	<u>Total</u>
Schools reported:	35	36	36	36
Students reported*:	2,160	2,009	1,579	7,017
Ninth grade:	1,125	578	227	2,460
Tenth grade:	831	1,033	575	2,881
Eleventh grade:	176	311	553	1,265
Twelfth grade:	28	87	224	410
Proportion of students who met the evaluation objective:	45.1%	37.5%	8.6%	25.6%
Average number of skills mastered:	6.18 (of 25)	5.16 (of 25)	2.69 (of 15)	3.98
Skills mastered as a percent of skills attempted:	49.9%	57.5%	58.6%	55.0%
Proportion of students who received counseling:	15.0%	16.8%	15.6%	15.1%
Average attendance (in days):	59.8	60.7	61.4	56.7
(*) No skills were reported for 1,269 students. All the breakdowns by level in the statistical analysis of the fall data exclude these students. However, the column labeled "Total" does include them.				

TABLE 2

Statistical Summary of the Program in the Spring

	Beginning Level	Intermediate Level	Advanced Level	Total
Schools reported:	35	36	36	37
Students reported*:	1,967	2,071	2,236	6,274
Ninth grade:	1,036	573	450	2,061
Tenth grade:	771	1,108	1,031	2,910
Eleventh grade:	138	315	548	1,001
Twelfth grade:	22	73	207	302
Proportion of students who met the evaluation objective:	42.3%	36.0%	13.6%	25.1%
Average number of skills mastered:	5.71 (of 25)	5.07 (of 25)	2.92 (of 15)	3.74
Skills mastered as a percent of skills attempted:	53.5%	56.8%	60.3%	57.3%
Proportion of students who received counseling:	20.3%	20.7%	16.5%	17.7%
Average attendance (in days):	59.0	60.0	59.9	59.6

(*) No skills were reported for 1,113 students. However, all the breakdowns by level in the statistical analysis of the spring data include these students.

TABLE 3

Proportion of Students Who Met the Criterion of Success of the Evaluation
Objective Broken Down by Their Attendance in the Program
During the Fall

Attendance (in days)	Number of of Students	No Skills Reported		EVALUATION OBJECTIVE Not Met		Met	
		%	#	%	#	%	#
10 or Fewer	321	82.2	(264)	7.2	(23)	10.5	(34)
11 - 20	201	71.6	(144)	8.5	(17)	19.9	(40)
21 - 30	225	7.8	(130)	18.2	(21)	24.0	(54)
31 - 40	386	42.7	(165)	31.9	(123)	25.4	(98)
41 - 50	819	19.5	(160)	54.3	(445)	26.1	(214)
51 - 60	2,676	9.2	(246)	64.5	(1,725)	26.3	(705)
61 or more	2,389	6.7	(160)	63.2	(1,511)	30.1	(718)
TOTAL		18.1	(1,269)	55.4	(3,885)	26.5	(1,863)

TABLE 4

Proportion of Students Who Met the Criterion of Success of the Evaluation
Objective Broken Down by Their Attendance in the Program
During the Spring

<u>Attendance</u> <u>(in days)</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>of Students</u>	<u>No</u> <u>Skills</u> <u>Reported</u>		<u>EVALUATION OBJECTIVE</u> <u>Not Met</u>		<u>Met</u>	
		<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>
10 or Fewer	235	80.0	(187)	16.2	(38)	3.8	(10)
11 - 20	186	80.6	(149)	4.8	(9)	14.5	(28)
21 - 30	206	60.6	(124)	18.9	(39)	20.4	(43)
31 - 40	335	40.3	(133)	34.9	(117)	24.8	(85)
41 - 50	780	17.3	(128)	55.3	(432)	27.3	(220)
51 - 60	2,524	10.6	(233)	62.6	(1,582)	26.8	(709)
61 or more	1,679	9.4	(159)	64.8	(1,087)	25.8	(433)
TOTAL	5,945	19.5	(1,113)	55.6	(3,204)	24.9	(1,528)

Table 5

Student Attendance Broken Down By Reasons for Incomplete DataFall

Attendance (in days)	COMPLETE DATA	INCOMPLETE DATA					
	Reported	Absent for Test	Truant	Discharged	Transferred Out	Other	Perfect Score on Pretest
10 or Fewer	15.0(48)	7.2(23)	44.2(142)	25.2(81)	7.2(23)	0.9(3)	0.3(1)
11 - 20	22.4(45)	8.5(17)	39.8(80)	18.4(37)	6.0(12)	3.5(7)	1.5(3)
21 - 30	40.4(91)	11.1(25)	32.0(72)	11.1(25)	1.3(3)	2.7(6)	1.3(3)
31 - 40	55.2(213)	15.8(61)	16.8(65)	7.3(28)	2.1(8)	1.6(6)	1.3(5)
41 - 50	79.9(654)	10.0(82)	4.0(33)	2.8(23)	0.7(6)	0.5(4)	1.8(15)
51 - 60	91.0(2434)	4.0(108)	0.6(17)	0.7(18)	0.3(7)	0.5(14)	2.9(77)
61 or more	93.6(2247)	0.8(20)	0.3(8)	0.8(18)	0.4(9)	0.4(10)	3.6(87)
TOTAL	81.5(5732)	4.8(376)	5.9(417)	3.3(230)	1.0(68)	0.7(50)	2.7(191)

Spring

Attendance (in days)	COMPLETE DATA	INCOMPLETE DATA					
	Reported	Absent for Test	Truant	Discharged	Transferred Out	Other	Perfect Score on Pretest
10 or Fewer	22.1(52)	9.4(22)	32.3(76)	26.4(62)	8.1(19)	0.9(2)	0.4(1)
11 - 20	19.9(37)	13.4(25)	39.8(74)	20.4(38)	1.6(3)	3.2(6)	0.5(1)
21 - 30	39.8(82)	16.5(34)	25.7(53)	12.1(25)	2.4(5)	1.5(3)	1.9(4)
31 - 40	59.7(200)	16.4(55)	13.4(45)	6.9(23)	0.9(3)	1.2(4)	1.5(5)
41 - 50	84.7(661)	7.4(58)	2.1(16)	2.2(17)	0.0(0)	0.6(5)	2.8(22)
51 - 60	91.8(2316)	3.2(82)	0.2(5)	0.3(7)	0.1(2)	0.7(18)	3.6(92)
61 - 70	91.7(1540)	1.0(17)	0.7(12)	1.3(22)	0.3(5)	0.8(14)	4.1(68)
TOTAL	82.2(4888)	4.9(293)	4.7(281)	3.3(194)	0.6(37)	0.9(52)	3.2(193)

TABLE 6

Proportion of Students Who Received Counseling Broken Down by Reason for Incomplete Test Results

Reasons	FALL COUNSELING			
	Not Received		Received	
	%	#	%	#
None	83.9	(4799)	16.1	(922)
Absent for test	92.6	(311)	7.4	(25)
Truant	84.7	(353)	15.3	(64)
Discharged	90.0	(209)	9.1	(21)
Transferred out	97.1	(66)	2.9	(2)
Other	82.0	(41)	18.0	(9)
Perfect score on pretest	92.1	(176)	7.9	(15)
			TOTAL	(7,017)
Reasons	SPRING			
	%	#	%	#
None	80.6	(3942)	19.4	(946)
Absent for test	93.5	(274)	6.5	(19)
Truant	80.8	(227)	19.2	(54)
Discharged	90.2	(175)	9.8	(19)
Transferred out	86.5	(32)	13.5	(5)
Other	88.5	(46)	11.5	(6)
Perfect score on pretest	97.4	(188)	2.6	(5)
			TOTAL	(5,945)

TABLE 7

Proportion of Students Who Met the Evaluation Objective According to
Whether They Received Counseling

	FALL		EVALUATION		OBJECTIVE	
			Not Met		Met	
<u>Counseling</u>			<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>
Not Received			74.1	(4416)	25.9	(1541)
Received			69.6	(738)	30.4	(322)
					TOTAL (7,017)	
	SPRING					
Not Received			76.3	(3732)	23.7	(1157)
Received			69.1	(730)	30.9	(326)
					TOTAL (5,945)	

TABLE 8

Statistical Summary of Selected Schools*

<u>Site</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
Students Reported:					
Beginning Level	75	125	200	225	40
Intermediate Level	50	110	225	225	60
Advanced Level	25	225	125	200	60
Proportion of Students who met the evaluation objective:	25.0%	20.0%	35.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Average number of skills mastered:	3.0	3.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
Number of skills mastered as a percent of number of skills attempted:	60.0%	70.0%	50.0%	55.0%	60.0%
Proportion of students who received counseling (in percent):	25.0	3.0	90.0	2.0	2.0
Average attendance (in days):	50	60	60	60	60

* This summary lists approximate results for both the fall and spring terms to demonstrate the exemplary/representative characteristics of the sites in which consultants conducted observations and interviews.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

The program benefits from a high degree of cooperation among all those involved in implementing the program. Aside from their regular visits, teacher trainers are available for specially requested workshops or general advice on matters of classroom teaching, testing and data collection. Excellent teaching materials are readily available from the central office. There is also frequent, informal communication between coordinators and teachers, among teachers, and between teachers and paraprofessionals. Teachers work at all instructional levels devising and sharing materials and demonstrating practical understanding of the operation and aims of each level. Title I and tax-levy courses are also generally well-coordinated, and the administrative staffs of the schools, as well as teachers in other programs, are supportive and sensitive to the goals of ESL classes. Apart from a tight curriculum in the program, this coordination with other programs is essential if the students are to be integrated into regular academic subjects.

Since the purpose of this report has been to describe and evaluate the organizational characteristics of sites where the ESL program is being effectively implemented, as well as to detail general features of the program, the successful characteristics identified above should be replicated in other ESL schools. These features include curriculum flexibility and classroom atmosphere.

The standardized elements of the ESL curriculum are based to a great extent on the CREST test. Individual student deficiencies, identified on the test, are directly linked to the CREST Objective Locator which serves as a syllabus for the program. However, because

1,200 student test results were not reported each term, it appears that the test is given infrequently, perhaps only as a pretest at the beginning of the term and as a posttest at the end. This practice produces two negative consequences: (1) skills mastered by students who are present for only part of the term cannot be reported; and (2) a more frequent use of the test might increase the average number of skills mastered among those students with complete data reported.

In spite of the operational success of the program, as discussed above, only about one-fourth of the students met the evaluation objective of the program which stated that a student should master one skill on the test for every ten days of instruction.

A possible reason why students fall short of meeting the evaluation objective may be a problem inherent within the objective itself. The mastery criterion of one objective for every ten days of instruction is arbitrary and may not reflect realistic expectations for students in the program. Furthermore, given the difference in student performance at different levels of the program (beginning, intermediate and advanced), a single objective for all students in the program appears to be problematic. As with the use of all criterion-referenced tests, it is important to set standards that are high enough for teachers and students to be motivated to reach these standards. But, in addition, these standards should not be so high that it is impossible for most students to achieve them. Indeed, they should be tied closely to the pattern of student advancement throughout the curriculum, in order to reflect realistic expectations for the student population within the program. For this to occur, it is necessary that longitudinal data be collected

to document the progress of students in the program. Only after this data is collected can realistic standards be set. In addition, in setting these standards of performance, student progress should be compared and equated to student performance on standardized instruments.

The evaluators have observed the ESL program and reviewed possible reasons for the discrepancies between the successful operation of the program and the comparatively low number of students who met the evaluation objective. It appears that the performance standard on the CREST stated in the evaluation objective is unrealistic. The fact that student outcome data does not meet the evaluation objective appears to be an artifact of the objective, not an indication of lack of student learning or poor student performance. Therefore, the following specific recommendations are made:

1. Progress of students at each level of the ESL Program should be maintained longitudinally. These data should be used for establishing realistic standards for student advancement within the program and for performance on the CREST.
2. An equating study should be performed in which students are tested using both the CREST and a standardized instrument. This will provide further data for establishing realistic criteria for student performance on the CREST.
3. The CREST should be given as students master specific skill areas, not only as a pretest and posttest. This will eliminate data loss for students who are not present for an entire term. Furthermore, it will give teachers an opportunity to assess the progress of

their students more frequently and may increase the chance that students have to achieve skill mastery.

4. A separate performance objective should be established for students at each level (beginning, intermediate and advanced) of the ESL program. The objective should reflect the difficulty of the curriculum at each level and the number of skills being taught at each level.